

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BUENOS 02163 281634Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

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PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 AID-05 PC-01 EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0526

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 2163

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, AR

SUBJECT: LABOR MOVES AGAINST LOPEZ REGA

REF: A. BA 2154, B. BA 9185, C. A-409, DEC 30, 1974

1. SUMMARY: LONG-TIME AND EXCELLENTLY-CONNECTED PERONIST CONTACT HAS CONFIRMED MAJOR OUTLINES OF SCENARIO DESCRIBED BY SENIOR FREJULI SENATOR (SEE REFTEL A). END SUMMARY.

2. SOURCE STATED THAT LABOR WAS OBVIOUS FULCRUM TO USE AGAINST LOPEZ REGA. HAD MILITARY SPEARHEADED THE EFFORT, IT MIGHT HAVE ENCOUNTERED DEGREE OF POPULAR OPPOSITION--EVEN FROM SOME ANTI-REGISTA ELEMENTS. UCR WAS NOT APPROPRIATE SINCE IT AN OPPOSITION PARTY. MAIN EFFORT HAD TO BE SUSTAINED BY PERONISTS THEMSELVES AND LABOR WAS BACKBONE OF MOVEMENT.

3. SOURCE HAD TALKED AT LENGTH WITH CASILDO HERRERAS DURING PAST FEW DAYS AND INDICATED THAT IN COMING MEETING WITH MRS. PERON, LATTER ALONG WITH LORENZO MIGUEL, WILL FORCEFULLY REITERATE DEMAND THAT LOPEZ REGA AND ALL HIS CRONIES BE OUSTED. SOURCE INDICATED LABOR ALSO WANTS OTERO, IVANISSEVICH AND VIGNES TO RESIGN FROM CABINET. GOMEZ MORALES MAY ALSO HAVE TO GO BUT COULD SAVE HIMSELF IF HE WILL DUMP SOME OF HIS TEAM TO WHOM LABOR

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 02163 281634Z

STRENUOUSLY OBJECTS. SOURCE DID NOT BELIEVE ANY OF THE CABINET

CHANGES, WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF LOPEZ REGA, WOULD TAKE PLACE UNTIL END OF APRIL AND HE AGREED THAT JUSTICE MINISTER BENITEZ IS PROBABLY THE MOST LIKELY REPLACEMENT FOR VIGNES. SOURCE SUPPORTED REPORTS FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT DEFENSE MINISTER SAVINO HAD SAVED HIMSELF BY TURNING AGAINST LOPEZ REGA WHILE THERE STILL TIME.

4. SOURCE INDICATED LASTIRI HAS MANEUVERED DESPARATELY DURING PAST WEEK BUT HAS NOT MANAGED TO WIN LABOR'S CONFIDENCE. THEY VIEW HIM WITH SUSPICION ON SEVERAL COUNTS: A) HIS OPPOSITION TO GREATER SHARE FOR LABOR IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, B) HIS TIES WITH LOPEZ REGA, AND C) HIS "LURID" PRIVATE LIFE (SEE REF B). SOURCE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE LASTIRI WAS IN TROUBLE, HE MIGHT WELL REMAIN PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, WITH REDUCTION IN HIS REAL POWER. THERE WAS EVEN A CHANCE, SOURCE THOUGHT, THAT LASTIRI CAN STILL BOLSTER HIS POSITION, PROVIDED HE PLAYS HIS CARDS RIGHT DURING NEXT FEW DAYS.

5. SOURCE PROBABLY DIFFERED MOST FROM SENATOR'S VIEW (SEE REFTTEL A) WITH REPECT TO POSITION OF ROCAMORA, WHO HE BELIEVED HAD ASSURED HIMSELF A COMMANDING ROLE IN THE POST-LOPEZ REGA GOVERNMENT.

6. COMMENT: SOURCE HAS LONG BEEN AN INTIMATE OF ROCAMORA AND HAS RECENTLY MOVED VERY CLOSE TO CASILDO HERRERAS. EARLIER ON THERE WAS ALSO A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH LASTIRI WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY SOURED SOMEWHAT. HENCE, HE IS BIASED IN FAVOR OF FIRST TWO AND AGAINST LATTER. HIS ANALYSIS SHOULD BE READ WITH THAT IN MIND.

7. FURTHER, WHILE SOURCE (AND LABOR ITSELF) TENDS TO PORTRAY LABOR'S MOVE AGAINST LOPEZ REGA AS ALTRUISTICALLY INSPIRED-- I.E. TO SAVE THE COUNTRY FROM RASCALS--, FACT IS THAT IS PART OF LABOR'S OWN MOVE FOR MORE POWER. AS STATED IN REF C, THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BASIC CONFLICT OF INTERESTS BETWEEN LOPEZ REGA AND LABOR--THAT IS, HE WANTS POWER AND SO DO THEY. IT IS THAT FACT, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, WHICH IS LEADING TO THE CRUNCH.

8. LASTLY, SOURCE OBVIOUSLY ASSUMES ANTI-LOPEZ REGA FORCES HAVE ALREADY WON. HE COULD BE ASSUMING TOO MUCH AT THIS POINT.

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 02163 281634Z

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